

## For 3 ex-cops, will blaming Chauvin for Floyd's death work?

**MINNEAPOLIS (AP)** — With Derek Chauvin convicted of murder in George Floyd's death, activists and the Floyd family are turning their attention to this summer's trial for the other three officers involved in his May 2020 arrest.

All three have already sought to deflect responsibility to Chauvin, by far the most senior officer on the scene.

Thomas Lane, J. Kueng and Tou Thao face trial in August on charges of aiding and abetting both second-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. Hennepin County Judge Peter Cahill ordered that they be tried together, but separately from Chauvin, to reduce the number of people in the courtroom amid the COVID-19 pan-

demic. As the three weigh their strategies, legal experts say they are sure to be watching what kind of prison time Chauvin gets at his June 16 sentencing — as much as 30 years, though likely less. Minnesota law sets the same penalties for aiding and abetting murder or manslaughter as for the act itself.

They'll also be mindful that it took jurors less than 24 hours to find Chauvin guilty on all charges. That could ratchet up pressure to consider a plea deal.

"The factual differences between Chauvin and the other three are what should drive this," said Tom Heffelfinger, a former U.S. attorney for Minnesota.

Experts said the best Lane, Kueng and Thao can hope for is a jury of 12 people



FILE - This combination of photos provided by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office in Minnesota on Wednesday, June 3, 2020, shows Minneapolis Police Officers Derek Chauvin, from left, J. Alexander Kueng, Thomas Lane and Tou Thao. (Hennepin County Sheriff's Office via AP, File)

who think Chauvin was guilty but aren't so sure about what roles the other three played. And they said the evidence against the three is weaker than the

evidence against Chauvin, which provides opportunities for their attorneys.

"I would expect the theme of all three would be, 'That's a really bad thing

that Chauvin did. I didn't like it. I'm not responsible for what happened,'" former Ramsey County prosecutor Susan Gaertner said.

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### Continued from Front

Prosecutors declined to discuss their case. Attorneys for Lane and Kueng also declined, and Thao's attorney did not return a message seeking comment. But their past filings and the evidence offer clues for likely strategies.

Lane and Kueng can argue they were rookies, in just their first week as full-fledged cops, and felt a need to defer to Chauvin — their training officer — when he pinned Floyd's neck to the ground with his knee for nearly 9 1/2 minutes as Floyd shouted repeatedly that he couldn't breathe before going silent, then limp.

"Those two rookies have a facially different defense,

and a very real factual defense, as compared to Chauvin," Heffelfinger said. Lane might have the best defense. Body camera video shows he asked the other officers if they should turn Floyd on his side — and Chauvin said no.

Local defense attorney Joe Friedberg said the evidence at Chauvin's trial showed that Lane was "trying to use as little force as possible" before Chauvin arrived and took charge. Kueng can be heard reporting to Chauvin at one point that he could not find Floyd's pulse.

"They're raising questions about what was happening and whether they should be doing something different," said an-

other local defense attorney, Brock Hunter. "It's not nearly as clear-cut as I think the evidence against Chauvin was." But both Chauvin and Kueng maintained their restraint, and body camera video shows Kueng holding up one of Floyd's handcuffed hands — an action that prosecution medical experts testified made it even harder for Floyd to breathe.

Thao can argue that it was crowd control, keeping an agitated group of about 15 onlookers at a safe distance, and that he largely had his back to the other officers and Floyd.

"His defense could be, 'I was just present and it takes more than presence to make a crime,'" Heffelfin-

ger said.

But one of the onlookers Thao specifically ordered to stand back was Genevieve Hansen, a Minneapolis firefighter who can be heard on video pleading repeatedly for officers to check Floyd's pulse. Hansen cried on the witness stand at Chauvin's trial as she described her frustration at being prevented from coming to Floyd's aid. The quick conviction for Chauvin spurred speculation about plea deals. Heffelfinger said prosecutors may be open to that because they're aware of the potential weaknesses in the cases against the three.

"Prosecutors know this stuff, so this is a good time for all parties to consider settlement over the next two or three months," he said.

Gaertner said prosecutors

will feel pressure not to strike

a plea deal that could be

seen by activists as letting

the officers off lightly. But

she said she hopes they do consider deals that would avert a trial, particularly due to the stress and expense of the just-completed trial that transformed parts of Minneapolis into a militarized zone. "Clearly these three defendants are significantly less culpable than Chauvin," she said. "And that should be taken into account. Another trial is going to be very disruptive, costly and I'm not sure that that's in the best interests of the public."

But Friedberg said he doesn't expect any deals.

"None of them will ever plead guilty," Friedberg predicted. "They have three really good lawyers who are extremely aggressive lawyers. There's no question in my mind they're going to go to trial and they're going to claim that they were completely unaware of the depths of what Derek Chauvin was doing." □



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The Aruba Today Newspaper announces that due to the official King's Day Holiday we will NOT be in circulation on Tuesday April 27th, 2021.

We will be back on newsstands everywhere bright and early to serve our readers and advertisers first thing in the morning on Wednesday April 28th.

Until then, paint the town Orange and enjoy King's Day on Aruba, from the team at Aruba Today.

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## Kansas agency's lost \$72K: 4 years of probing, few answers

By John Hanna Associated Press

**TOPEKA, Kan. (AP)**—Sometime after a January 2017 drug bust near Interstate 70's main exit for President Dwight Eisenhower's boyhood Kansas home, \$72,000 in cash seized by the local sheriff's department disappeared.

The state has been investigating the Dickinson County Sheriff's Department for close to four years, with two officials saying in a court filing this year that a "fear of retribution" among department employees had slowed progress. A three-term sheriff lost last year's Republican primary decisively to a former longtime officer who told voters the department was falling apart.

The mystery has unfolded amid a national debate over whether law enforcement agencies can too easily seize cash and other assets — often without a criminal conviction. Interstate 70 has long been considered a major drug-running corridor.

Meanwhile, there's no official explanation for what happened to the cash seized in Dickinson County. "I would like to think that we could get some closure on that," said Brad Homman, the county administrator.

Abilene, the county seat with 6,400 people, is about 150 miles west (241 kilometers) of Kansas City. Eisenhower's presidential library gives the town a hint of prairie rectitude, though it

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This Friday, April 23, 2021 photo shows the bottom part of a report filed by a Kansas Bureau of Investigation agent on Oct. 10, 2018, about \$72,020 in cash missing from the custody of the Dickinson County Sheriff's Department sometime after a January 2017 drug bust. There's still no official explanation for what happened to the cash, despite KBI investigations. (AP Photo/John Hanna)

had a pre-ike past as the end of the Chisholm Trail for 1860s cattle drovers.

No criminal charges have been filed over the missing \$72,000. The Kansas Bureau of Investigation closed an inquiry into the former sheriff in October 2019 and the missing funds were "fully investigated," spokesperson Melissa Underwood said.

Yet, Underwood also wrote in a recent email to The Associated Press, "We have open cases involving Dickinson County Sheriff's Office personnel."

Current Sheriff Jerry Davis cited the KBI's inquiries in declining to answer most questions. The local prosecutor, Andrea Purvis, didn't respond to interview

requests or emailed questions.

Former Sheriff Gareth Hoffman and his undersheriff didn't respond to social media or email messages. Possible phone numbers for them weren't answered. Some details emerged when a lawsuit forced KBI Director Kirk Thompson and General Counsel Laura Graham to answer questions in writing in late February. They were defending the KBI's refusal to release records five months after the Abilene Reflector-Chronicle's parent company sued for disclosure.

Thompson and Graham said officers wouldn't help the KBI if they knew their statements would become

public. "One deputy was advised by commanding officers that he would be fired if he spoke about a theft," the KBI officials said. Any picture of what happened is clouded by separate allegations in early 2017 that a lieutenant improperly borrowed \$25,760 over 4 1/2 years, most of it from a property room in the basement the county attorney's office building. The officer later pleaded guilty to felony theft in a case that has prompted questions about how Hoffman ran the department.

The KBI said that the sheriff's office asked it in late May 2017 to investigate the \$72,000 missing from its property room. The sheriff

has an evidence room in the county courthouse.

Dickinson County Commission Chairman Lynn Peterson believes people were satisfied then with the sheriff's leadership and notes that it was the sheriff's office "that uncovered the fact that money was missing and started gathering information."

But in May 2018, nearly a year after the sheriff's office sought KBI help, Purvis asked the state agency to investigate "possible evidence destruction and interference with law enforcement" by Hoffman or his employees.

Local officials' requests for KBI investigations were confirmed in a September 2020 letter to the Reflector-Chronicle's attorney from Graham, the KBI's general counsel. The letter, now public because of the open-records lawsuit the newspaper filed days later, wasn't more specific about what Purvis wanted investigated.

A KBI agent filed an offense report in October 2018 saying \$72,020 was missing in a potential "Theft of property or services." The report's front page — the only page typically released in Kansas — does not name suspects. Graham's letter said the KBI spent about 18 months investigating the missing money and more than a year investigating allegations involving Hoffman and his employees. The state found "insufficient evidence" for charges. □

## At least 6 killed in fiery van crash on Georgia interstate

**SUWANEE, Ga. (AP)** — At least six people died and several others were hurt in an interstate crash in Georgia that left a passenger van engulfed in flames and rolled on its side, police said.

Passersby stopped to pull people from the burning vehicle Saturday evening along I-85 near the I-985 split, Gwinnett County police Sgt. Michele Pihera said in a news release. The

area is about 35 miles (56 kilometers) northeast of downtown Atlanta.

Six people were pronounced dead at the scene and several others were taken to Atlanta-area hospitals for treatment.

One bystander suffered a minor injury but declined to be transported, police said. It was unclear how many people were inside the van but police believe all were adults. The news release

said details about the people in the van would be announced in the coming days.

Investigators were working to determine the cause of the crash.

Information at the scene led police to believe another vehicle may have been involved. Witnesses were asked to call the police department's accident investigation tip line with any information. □



This photo provided by the Gwinnett County Police Department shows tire marks on the pavement, front, near the scene of a deadly crash in Gwinnett County, Ga., Saturday, April 24, 2021. Police in Georgia say multiple people died and several others were hurt in the interstate crash. Gwinnett County police say the crash left a passenger van engulfed in flames and rolled on its side Saturday evening. (Gwinnett County Police Department via AP)

## Minority legislators sense moment to pass 'bold' legislation

By Susan Haigh Associated Press

(AP) - In July after George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis, Black and Latino members of the Connecticut General Assembly worked to enact sweeping changes to policing in the state, and since, have continue to flex their collective muscles.

Vowing that was "just the beginning," the lawmakers have turned to other long-standing issues affecting communities of color, from insisting any new recreational marijuana program will benefit those most harmed by the war on drugs, to addressing the impact of racism on public health disparities that were underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We pretty much said that no bill will pass if it's not equitable to the communities of color. We pretty much said, 'That's our mantra,'" said Rep. Geraldo Reyes, a Democrat and chairman of the influential Black and Puerto Rican Caucus, which has a record high 32 members this year in the 151-member Connecticut General Assembly.

They led passage of a bill in March making it illegal to discriminate against someone because of their hairstyle, with lawmakers recalling during emotional floor debates the indignity they and their relatives have experienced for wearing their natural hair in work places or at schools. Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont signed it into law.

In state legislatures across the country, minority legislators and their allies are seizing on the nation's reckoning with racial injustice to insist equity be considered in a range of legislation. And many are urging their colleagues to be bold.

"If we don't do it now, we will never get it done," said Connecticut state Sen. Doug McCrory of Hartford, a Black legislator who called for an end to "Novocain" legislation: numbing, incremental bills that don't make major improvements for people of color regarding housing, economic op-



Connecticut House Majority Leader Jason Rojas, D-East Hartford, right, speaks with State Rep. Toni Walker, D-New Haven, left, during session at the State Capitol in Hartford, Conn., on Monday, April 19, 2021. In July 2020 after George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis, Black and Latino members of the Connecticut General Assembly worked to enact sweeping changes to policing in the state, and since, have continue to flex their collective muscles. (AP Photo/Jessica Hill)

portunity, education and more.

A similar sentiment was echoed in California, where the first Black lawmakers to lead that Legislature's two public safety committees promised to bring "radical change" to improve the treatment of Black and Latino people by law enforcement.

"We can now focus like a laser to make sure that our communities are not continuing to be oppressed," said Assemblyman Reggie Jones-Sawyer, a Democrat from Los Angeles.

The push comes as legislators of color are growing in numbers and political clout in some states, giving them a greater ability to advance such ambitious legislation that's being urged by their constituents.

In recent testimony, Vanessa Monique Liles of Bridgeport, Connecticut's largest city, pressed state lawmakers to pass legislation declaring racism a public health crisis and creating a new state commission on racial equity and public health.

"As a Black woman, I personally experience the effect of systemic racism, daily, but for the low-income public housing community, it is greater because there are multiple systems that weigh-in on their lives," she

said.

Liles is part of a grassroots group of public housing residents who she said lives in "environmentally damaged" areas with poor clinics and schools "because of this cyclical oppression resulting from racism."

In Connecticut, there are more racial minorities in legislative leadership positions than anytime in recent memory, including House Majority Leader Jason Rojas, the first Hispanic person to hold one of the top jobs. According to the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials or NALEO, the number of Latino state legislators has grown nationally from 197 members in 2001 to 332 in 2021. NALEO also identified Latino lawmakers holding top legislative leadership positions in nine states. Meanwhile, there are currently 752 Black lawmakers in state and U.S. territory legislatures, according to the National Black Caucus of State Legislators.

Legislators in other states including Minnesota, Ohio and Pennsylvania say they too are sensing an opportunity to advance equity-related proposals that have stalled in the past. Minnesota State Rep. Fue Lee, a Hmong-American Democrat who represents

part of Minneapolis, the city where Floyd was killed, said his legislature would not have been able to pass wide-ranging police reforms last year, including a ban on chokeholds in all but extreme circumstances, without the efforts of the People of Color and Indigenous (POCI) Caucus.

"We are looking at the public investment that we're making and some of the policies through a racial equity lens to ensure that whatever money or whatever legislative policy that's coming through the legislature, it needs to consider the racial equity impact that it's going to have on the rest of Minnesotans," said Lee, who chairs the State Capital Investment Committee that oversees a budget of about \$1 billion. Even as Black, Latino and Asian lawmakers move into leadership positions in Democratic leaning states, some politically red states are considering bills that may limit voting participation.

In Georgia, where Republicans control the legislature, Democratic lawmakers of color failed to stop the passage of a contentious election law that adds a photo ID requirement for voting absentee by mail and cuts the amount of time people have to request an absen-

tee ballot, among other provisions. It's part of a tide of GOP-sponsored election bills introduced in legislatures across the country after Republican former President Donald Trump falsely claimed there was widespread election fraud. While Republicans in Georgia have argued the law is needed to restore voters' confidence, critics have said it will make it harder for people to vote, particularly Black and other minority voters.

Democratic state Senate Minority Leader Gloria Butler said the new law overshadowed legislative accomplishments made in 2021, such as the repeal of the Georgia's citizen's arrest law. The bill passed a little more than a year after the fatal shooting of a Black man, Ahmaud Arbery, who was pursued and killed by white men who said they suspected him of a crime. "It's hard not to feel that with this excellent progress, that we are not taking one step forward and two steps back," Butler said on the closing day of the legislative session last month.

Arturo Vargas, CEO of the NALEO Education Fund, said he believes the voting legislation that passed in Georgia and similar proposals considered in other Republican-leaning states reflect an attempt to curb the growing influence of minority state lawmakers.

"At some point, there will be more Latinos and Latinas and African Americans in leadership roles, and I think what the status quo wants to do is to delay it as much as possible," he said. "And that is exactly, in my view, the point of some of these changes in voting practices that legislatures are doing around the country."

Not all state lawmakers of color support these efforts to promote racial equity through state laws. In Connecticut, Republican Rep. Kimberly Fiorello, who is of Asian descent, recently questioned language that referred to addressing racial and gender disparities in a bill legalizing the adult use of cannabis. □

## Virus 'swallowing' people in India; crematoriums overwhelmed

By Sheikh Saaliq and Aijaz Hussain Associated Press

**NEW DELHI (AP)** — With life-saving oxygen in short supply, family members in India are left on their own to ferry coronavirus patients from hospital to hospital in search of treatment as the country is engulfed in a devastating new surge of infections. Too often their efforts end in mourning.

The stories are told in social media posts and television footage, showing desperate relatives pleading for oxygen outside hospitals or weeping in the street for loved ones who died waiting for treatment.

One woman mourned the death of her younger brother, aged 50. He was turned away by two hospitals and died waiting to be seen at a third, gasping after his oxygen tank ran out and no replacements were to be had.

She blamed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government for the crisis.

"He has lit funeral pyres in every house," she cried in a video shot by India's weekly magazine The Caravan.

For the fourth straight day, India on Sunday set a global daily record of new coronavirus infections, spurred by an insidious new variant that emerged here. The surge has undermined the government's premature claims of victory over the pandemic.

The 349,691 confirmed infections over the past day brought India's total to more than 16.9 million cases, behind only the United States. The Health Ministry reported another 2,767 deaths in the past 24 hours, pushing India's fatalities to 192,311.

Experts say this toll could be a huge undercount, as suspected cases are not included, and many COVID-19 deaths are being attributed to underlying conditions.

The unfolding crisis is most visceral in India's overwhelmed graveyards and crematoriums, and in heartbreak images of gasping patients dying on their way to hospitals due



A relative of a person who died of COVID-19 breaks down during cremation in Jammu, India, Sunday, April 25, 2021. India's crematoriums and burial grounds are being overwhelmed by the devastating new surge of infections tearing through the populous country with terrifying speed, depleting the supply of life-saving oxygen to critical levels and leaving patients to die while waiting in line to see doctors. (AP Photo/Channi Anand)

to lack of oxygen.

Burial grounds in the capital New Delhi are running out of space. Bright, glowing funeral pyres light up the night sky in other badly hit cities.

In the central city of Bhopal, some crematoriums have increased their capacity from dozens of pyres to more than 50. Yet officials say there are still hours-long waits.

At the city's Bhadbhada Vishram Ghat crematorium, workers said they cremated more than 110 people on Saturday, even as government figures in the entire city of 1.8 million put the total number of virus deaths at just 10.

"The virus is swallowing our city's people like a monster," said Mamtesh Sharma, an official at the site.

The unprecedented rush of bodies has forced the crematorium to skip individual ceremonies and exhaustive rituals that Hindus believe release the soul from the cycle of rebirth.

"We are just burning bodies as they arrive," said Sharma. "It is as if we are in the middle of a war."

The head gravedigger at New Delhi's largest Muslim cemetery, where 1,000 people have been buried during the pandemic, said more bodies are arriving now than last year. "I fear

we will run out of space very soon," said Mohammad Shameem.

The situation is equally grim at unbearably full hospitals, where desperate people are dying in line, sometimes on the roads outside, waiting to see doctors.

Health officials are scrambling to expand critical care units and stock up on dwindling supplies of oxygen. Hospitals and patients alike are struggling to procure scarce medical equipment that is being sold on the black market at an exponential markup.

The drama is in direct contrast with government claims that "nobody in the country was left without oxygen," in a statement made Saturday by India's Solicitor General Tushar Mehta before Delhi High Court.

The breakdown is a stark failure for a country whose prime minister only in January had declared victory over COVID-19, and which boasted of being the "world's pharmacy," a global producer of vaccines and a model for other developing nations.

Caught off-guard by the latest deadly spike, the federal government has asked industrialists to increase the production of oxygen and other life-saving drugs in short supply. But health ex-

pects say India had an entire year to prepare for the inevitable — and it didn't.

Dr. Krutika Kuppalli, assistant professor of medicine in the division of infectious diseases at the Medical University of South Carolina, said the government should have used the last year, when the virus was more under control, to stockpile medicines and develop systems to confront the likelihood of a new surge.

"Most importantly, they should have looked at what was going on in other parts of the world and understood that it was a matter of time before they would be in a similar situation," Kuppalli said. Instead, the government's premature declarations of victory over the pandemic created a "false narrative," which encouraged people to relax health measures when they should have continued strict adherence to physical distancing, wearing masks and avoiding large crowds.

Modi is facing mounting criticism for allowing Hindu festivals and attending mammoth election rallies that experts suspect accelerated the spread of infections. At one such rally on April 17, Modi expressed his delight at the huge crowd, even as experts warned that a deadly surge was in

"Humanitarian issues require responses beyond political consideration," Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said. □

# Death toll in fire at Iraqi COVID-19 hospital surpasses 80

**BAGHDAD (AP)** — The death toll from a massive fire at a Baghdad hospital for coronavirus patients rose to 82 Sunday as anxious families searched for missing relatives and the government suspended key health officials for alleged negligence.

The flames, described by one witness as "volcanoes of fire," swept through the intensive care unit of the Ibn al-Khatib Hospital, which tends exclusively to COVID-19 patients with severe symptoms. Officials said the blaze, which also injured 110 people, was set off by an exploding oxygen cylinder.

Nurse Maher Ahmed was called to the scene late Saturday to help evacuate patients.

"I could not have imagined it would be a massive blaze like that," he said. The flames overwhelmed the hospital's second floor isolation hall within three to four minutes of the oxygen cylinder exploding, he said. "Volcanoes of fire."

Most of those killed suffered severe burns, he said. Others were overcome by smoke, unwilling to leave behind relatives hooked up



**Mourners pray near the coffins of coronavirus patients who were killed in a hospital fire, during their funeral at the Imam Ali shrine in Najaf, Iraq, Sunday, April 25, 2021. Iraq's Interior Ministry said Sunday that over 80 people died and over 100 were injured in a catastrophic fire that broke out in the intensive care unit of a Baghdad hospital tending to severe coronavirus patients in the early morning Sunday. (AP Photo/Anmar Khalil)**

to ventilators. Ahmed said the patients could not be moved. "They would have minutes to live without oxygen."

He said he and others watched helplessly as one patient struggled to breathe amid the smoke. Widespread negligence on the part of health offi-

cials is to blame for the fire, Iraq's prime minister, Mustafa al-Kadhimi, said Sunday. Following a special cabinet meeting to discuss the blaze, the government suspended key officials, including the health minister and the governor of Baghdad province. Other officials, including the hospital

director, were dismissed from their posts.

It took firefighters and civil defense teams until early Sunday to put out the flames.

Among the dead were at least 28 patients on ventilators, tweeted Ali al-Bayati, a spokesman of the country's independent Human

Rights Commission, a semi-official body.

Paramedics carried the bodies, many burned beyond recognition, to al-Zafaraniya Hospital, where Ahmed said forensics teams will attempt to identify them by matching DNA samples to relatives.

By midday Sunday, relatives were still searching anxiously for loved ones.

"Please, two of my relatives are missing. ... I am going to die (without news about them)," posted a young woman on social media after a fruitless search for her family members. "I hope someone can help us find Sadi Abdul Kareem and Samir Abdul Kareem, they were in the ICU."

Roky Kareem, 30, was looking frantically for his friend Riyam Rahman, a pharmacist, who was visiting her mother at the hospital. Riyam's mother, Basima was admitted to Ibn al-Khatib 45 days ago with complications from COVID-19.

"All we know is they were in the room next to where the fire started," he said. "Her phone is switched off, and her family has gone to every hospital trying to find them." □

## Pope: Migrants begged for help at sea, shamefully ignored



**Pope Francis delivers his blessing as he recites the Regina Coeli noon prayer from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square, at the Vatican, Sunday, April 25, 2021. (AP Photo/Andrew Medichini)**

By Frances D'Emilio Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis on Sunday decried as shameful the deaths of 130 migrants in the Mediterranean, saying they pleaded for two days for help for their overcrowded, foun-

dering rubber dinghy in the sea off Libya but potential rescuers choose "to look the other way."

Francis called the sea tragedy last week "a moment of shame."

The migrants had made a call for help on Wednes-

day. On Thursday, when a humanitarian rescue boat and a merchant ship sailing in very rough waters arrived at the scene, the deflating dinghy had partially sunk, several bodies were seen in the water and no survivors were found. Rescue centers in Libya, Malta and Italy had been alerted, according to the European Union border protection agency Frontex, whose plane had located the dinghy.

"I confess to you I am very pained by the tragedy that once again played out in the last days in the Mediterranean," the pope told people in St. Peter's Square who gathered to hear his traditional Sunday noon remarks.

"One hundred and thirty migrants died in the sea. They are persons, human lives, who for two entire days im-

plored in vain for help, help that didn't arrive," Francis said.

"Let us pray for these brothers and sisters, let us interrogate all of ourselves about this latest tragedy," the pope said. "It is a moment of shame."

"Let us pray also for those who can help but who prefer to look the other way," the pope added.

SOS Mediterranee, a humanitarian group whose rescue ship Ocean Viking sailed toward the distressed dinghy amid strong winds and high waves, said a Libyan coast guard vessel was supposed to arrive at the scene but never did. Libyan coast guard officials have said bad weather and the need to help other migrants in distress off the coast of the North African country meant it couldn't

reach the dinghy in time. Human traffickers based in Libya continuously launch unseaworthy dinghies and small fishing boats filled with migrants hoping to reach European shores for a better life.

A few hours after the pope's denunciation, the Italian coast guard said with a help of a container ship it aided an ailing motorized fishing boat filled with migrants that was struggling in towering waves and stiff winds.

The vessel, which had at least 100 people aboard including children, was spotted Saturday, it said. After the boat's motor quit working it was at risk of overturning in the waves. Coast guard motorboats towed it and it arrived Sunday at a port in Calabria, southern Italy. □

## Albanians hold parliamentary vote amid wide political divide

By Lazar Semini Associated Press

**TIRANA, Albania (AP)** — Albanians voted Sunday in a parliamentary election amid the pandemic, opposition allegations of official corruption and a bitter rivalry between the country's two largest political parties. Some 3.6 million eligible voters, including Albanians overseas, were electing 140 lawmakers among 1,841 candidates from 17 political parties or coalitions, along with some running independently. No early or postal voting was allowed and people infected with COVID-19 cannot vote.

Following the approval of electoral reforms last year, a new voters' electronic identification, a partial de-politicizing of the electoral commission and a pilot project on full digitalization of the voting and counting process are being applied. The hope is that post-communist Albania's 10th parliamentary election will be free and fair. To date, voting always has been marred by irregularities. Preliminary turnout at 2 p.m. was 35.7%.

Albania, a NATO member since 2009, is looking forward to launching full membership negotiations with the European Union later this year and Sunday's vote is considered a key milestone on that path.

Prime Minister Edi Rama of the governing Socialists, who are seeking their third



An Albanian woman's finger is scanned during parliamentary elections in capital Tirana, Albania on Sunday, April 25, 2021. Albanian voters have started casting ballots in parliamentary elections on Sunday amid the virus pandemic and a bitter political rivalry between the country's two largest political parties. (AP Photo/Visar Kryeziu)

consecutive mandate, wants to boost Albanian efforts in tourism, energy, agriculture and digital projects. Pre-election polls showed Rama's left-wing Socialist Party likely to place first. Yet Lulzim Basha of the opposition Democratic Party accuses the government of corruption and links to organized crime, and pledges lower taxes, higher salaries and more social support. Confrontations between supporters of the two main parties culminated Wednesday in central Elbasan city, where a leading activist of the Socialist Party died. Police said the victim was shot, allegedly by a member of the op-

position Democratic Party, during an argument. Though officially impartial, President Ilir Meta has turned into a strong government opponent, accusing Rama of concentrating all legislative, administrative and judicial powers in his hands and running a "kleptocratic regime" that has bungled pandemic

response and delayed the country's EU integration. There were some glitches Sunday. The electronic identification machines did not operate in 142 out of 5,199 polling stations after no operators to work them were found in those remote areas, according to Ilirjan Celibashi, head of the Central Election Commission. □

An Albanian man was arrested after photographing the ballot, something not allowed by law.

Political leaders called on people to vote as they cast their own ballots. Kosovar Prime Minister Albin Kurti, also an Albanian citizen, voted, too.

"For the Constitution, for the republic, for democracy, for Albania in Europe," said Meta. Scores of foreign observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Western embassies were monitoring the vote.

"We hope that every Albanian citizen goes and votes, free of fear, free of interference," said U.S. Ambassador Yuri Kim at a polling station in northern Shkodra. "This is your day."

Albania has seen a significant fall in daily coronavirus cases in the past week despite political rallies being held around the country. More than 400,000 people have received a vaccine jab. An overnight curfew has been enforced with restrictions on gatherings and mandatory mask-wearing. □

## Lebanon thwarts attempt to smuggle 69 Syrians to Cyprus

**BEIRUT (AP)** — Lebanese troops aborted early Sunday an attempt to smuggle dozens of Syrian migrants to the Mediterranean island of Cyprus, the military said. The attempt to smuggle 69 Syrian citizens comes as Lebanon is witnessing a severe economic and financial crisis that has thrown more people into poverty. There have been attempts over the past year to smuggle migrants to European

Union member Cyprus during which some of the migrants were killed. The Mediterranean island and Lebanon have an agreement to curb the arrival of boats loaded with migrants from reaching Cyprus. The Lebanese army said in a statement that soldiers and members of the army intelligence thwarted the attempt in the northern district of Arida near the border with Syria. □

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## MedCare's Fit2Fly COVID-19 Testing Centers: Just introduced a game changer: Rapid PCR, minutes not hours to get your results.

**PALM BEACH** — MedCare's Fit2Fly COVID-19 Testing Center is your best option for the post vacation COVID-19 test which is now required by the U.S. before returning home. All passengers going to the United States, including U.S. citizens, are required to have a negative (antigen or PCR) COVID-19 test result of a test taken maximum three days prior to boarding the flight, or documentation of recovery from COVID-19. MedCare's testing centers in and close to the hotels provide you with an easy and secure solution.

MedCare Clinic, a high-quality medical clinic that is specialized in urgent care for tourists and that has been appointed as the national COVID-19 clinic for tourists, and Laboratorio di Servicio, a full-service modern medical laboratory with state-of-the-art equipment, have partnered up to provide fast and reliable COVID-19 testing to all. Laboratorio di Servicio is ISO-15189:2012 accredited by the Dutch Council for Accreditation (M317).

### Rapid PCR

As Aruba resumes to receive more and more visitors each month, one thing has become very clear: testing is critical. Thus far Medcare Clinic has been offering high-volume laboratory testing with results in 24 hours or less. The newest service on the market is Rapid PCR, where you receive your results in minutes not hours.

### Just steps away from you

The Fit2Fly COVID-19 Testing Centers are located at the Cove Mall and at the Courtyard Aruba Resort at the mill, two locations at a stone's throw from your resort, condominium, or other vacation accommodation.. Walk-ins are welcome. It is recommended that the tests are done timely, as the negative test is only accepted if taken up to three days before boarding your flight. MedCare Fit2Fly Testing Center at the Cove Mall is opposite the Holiday Inn and is open every day for walk-ins from 8am through 10pm. MedCare's other location is situated at The Courtyard Aruba Resort, is across the street from the RIU Hotel and is open every day from 8:30am until 12:30pm.



### At your hotel

For a selection of hotels/resorts in Aruba, MedCare has setup Testing Centers on site. The hotels/resorts at which we have a testing site are: Divi All Inclusive, Divi Dutch Village, Divi Golf, Divi Phoenix, Divi Tamarind, Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort, Hyatt Regency, Renaissance, and the Ritz-Carlton Resort. Please contact your front desk for more information on our Testing Centers at these properties.



### Costs and timing

Passengers must be tested with a viral test that could be either an Antigen Test or a nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT), such as the reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (PCR). The price for the Antigen Test is only \$50, and the PCR Test is available, for \$125. The new rapid PCR will be \$150 (results in 30 minutes.) MedCare offers the easier and substantially cheaper Antigen Test that is acceptable for travel to the U.S. as per the CDC guidelines. Pre-travel testing is not covered by the Aruban visitor insurance. Please contact your insurance company to verify if testing costs are insured. Results are e-mailed to you within 24 hours of testing.

### Private bookings

For your convenience, Medcare also offers private testing at your accommodation/hotel room for a one-time service fee of \$120. This fee covers testing up to 10 people (one appointment, at one location and a specific time). Additional persons will be charged \$10 per person. □

### To book your test in advance, please contact:

Phone: +297 280 0630

Email: [info@medcare.aw](mailto:info@medcare.aw)

For more information on MedCare Testing Centers:

<https://medcare.aw/en/covid-19-testing>



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## Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas

**SAN NICOLAS**— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between the 1920's until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas - more than anywhere else on the island.

### Flow of history

If you are looking for history San Nicolas has it. Here you will find three amazing museums, The Museum of Industry, the Community Museum and the Carnival Euphoria, all within walking distance from one another.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San Nicolas once a bustling business center. Experience the touching stories of those who were part of this history.

Nicolaas Store built in 1940 and renovated in 2014 is the home of



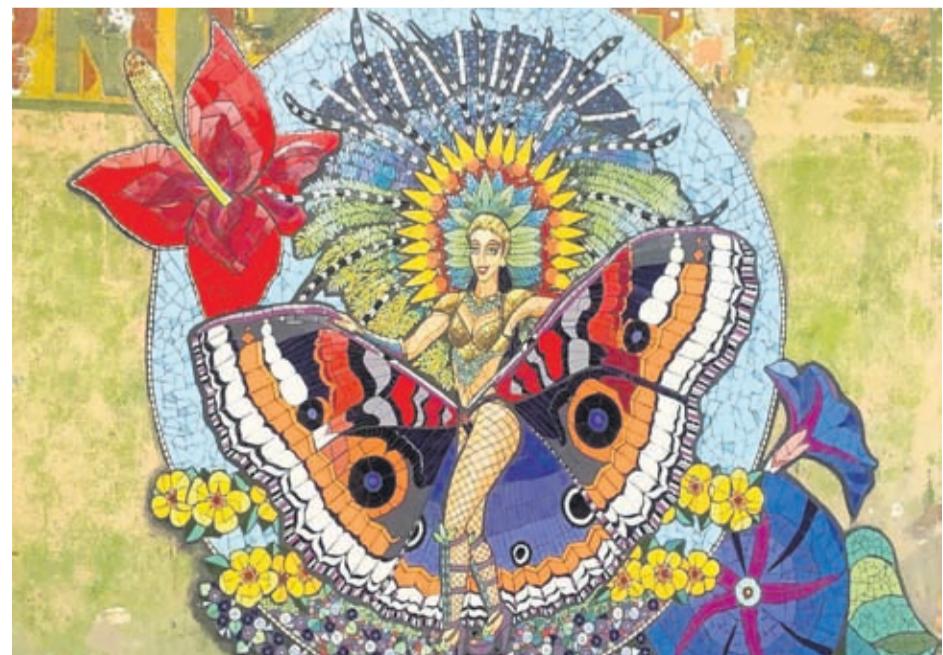
the Community Museum. The collection is remarkable and spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaus of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barbershop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of education or enjoyment.

### The new San Nicolas

In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to grow. This is the new San Nicolas, a place that is starting to become a magnet for all that is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection of artists from around the world. Thanks to the efforts of various art organizations in Aruba, such as Art Rules Aruba and Aruba Art Fair, San Nicolas has had quite the aesthetic makeover with regards to vibrant street art. Each year more and more stunning murals are replacing broken down buildings with colorful art pieces that keep brightening up SunriseCity.

### Must See, Do, Buy & Eat

A little bit of everything can be found in the main street. Stores selling shoes, clothing, jewelry you name it. Arts & crafts by Cosecha store & Creative Center, a design store in which you can immerse yourself in discovering genuine and locally made arts and crafts which reflect the diversification of the Aruban craft heritage and the artistic supply of artisans. Don't miss out on trying the exquisite food offered by the cafes and restaurants or just enjoy a peaceful walk admiring the murals, mosaic benches and all the history San Nicolas has to offer. □



# Celebrating our king, His Majesty King Willem-Alexander

ORANJESTAD – In case you happen to be on vacation in Aruba, tomorrow Tuesday April 27, is a national holiday in which we are celebrating King's day. It's the day where the Aruban people show their love for their King Willem-Alexander. His birthday is usually celebrated in Aruba with lots of festivities, but just as same as last year, due to the Covid-19 virus this will not be the same again this year. However, restaurants will be having specials for this special occasion and you will also be able to see a lot of the color orange, referring to the color of the Dutch Royal Family, which hails from the House of Orange.

The colors of the official Dutch flag are red, white, and blue. On royal birthdays, the Dutch tricolor is flown with an orange pennant above it. Each year on April 27, Amsterdam — and indeed the entire country — turns orange and because Aruba is part of the Dutch Kingdom, we celebrate along. Aruba is one of the four countries that make up the Kingdom of the Netherlands: The Netherlands, Aruba, Sint Maarten and Curacao.



## Willem-Alexander

His Majesty King Willem-Alexander was born on 27 April 1967. Willem-Alexander is the firstborn of Princess Beatrix and Prince Claus. His brothers Prince Friso (1968-2013) and Prince Constantijn (1969) followed soon. He was first in the line of succession since his mother's accession to the throne on April 30, 1980, he also bore the title of prince of Orange. Willem-Alexander married Argentine-born Máxima Zorreguieta (thereafter Princess Máxima) in Amsterdam. The world witnessed the fairytale wedding of Prince Willem Alexander and



Máxima Zorreguieta on February 2nd, 2002. On April 30, 2013, Beatrix stepped down, and Willem-Alexander was inaugurated as king of the Netherlands. The couple has three daughters: Catharina-Amalia, Princess of Orange and first in line to the throne, Princess Alexia of the Netherlands and Princess Ariane of the Netherlands. In his role as the King, he is the Head of State or in other words the inviolable part of the government. He performs government-related tasks, like signing acts, receiving oaths from government officials, and ceremonial tasks. This may involve receiving heads of state and paying state visits, attending jubilee events of important social institutions, or visiting and supporting the victims of national disasters. King Willem-Alexander is the head of state of Aruba and the governor represents the monarch in Aruba. □

### King's day Facts:

- The royal celebrations were first held on 31 August 1885, in honour of the birth of Queen Wilhelmina
- The average person spends €26 on orange outfits or souvenirs for King's Day
- There's a whopping 600% increase in tom-pouce sales on King's Day compared to any other day
- Willem-Alexander is the first male monarch of the Netherlands in 123 years



# The big Pentagon internet mystery now partially solved

**BOSTON (AP)** — A very strange thing happened on the internet the day President Joe Biden was sworn in. A shadowy company residing at a shared workspace above a Florida bank announced to the world's computer networks that it was now managing a colossal, previously idle chunk of the internet owned by the U.S. Department of Defense.

That real estate has since more than quadrupled to 175 million addresses — about 1/25th the size of the current internet.

"It is massive. That is the biggest thing in the history of the internet," said Doug Madory, director of internet analysis at Kentik, a network operating company. It's also more than twice the size of the internet space actually used by the Pentagon.

After weeks of wonder by the networking community, the Pentagon has now provided a very terse explanation for what it's doing. But it has not answered many basic questions, beginning with why it chose to entrust management of the address space to a company that seems not to have existed until September.

The military hopes to "assess, evaluate and prevent unauthorized use of DoD IP address space," said a statement issued Friday by Brett Goldstein, chief of the Pentagon's Defense Digital Service, which is running the project. It also hopes to "identify potential vulnerabilities" as part of efforts to defend against cyberintrusions by global adversaries, who are consistently infiltrating U.S. networks, sometimes operating from unused internet address blocks.

The statement did not specify whether the "pilot project" would involve outside contractors.

The Pentagon periodically contends with unauthorized squatting on its space, in part because there has been a shortage of first-generation internet addresses since 2011; they now sell at auction for upwards of \$25 each.



**FILE** - This March 27, 2008, file photo, shows the Pentagon in Washington. After weeks of wonder by the networking community, the Pentagon has now provided a very terse explanation for why it hired a shadowy company residing at a shared workspace above a Florida bank to manage a colossal, previously idle chunk of the internet that it owns. Many basic questions remain unanswered, beginning with why it chose for the task a company that seems not to have existed until September. The company, Global Resource Systems, has not responded to attempts by The Associated Press to seek comment. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak, File)

Madory said advertising the address space will make it easier to chase off squatters and allow the U.S. military to "collect a massive amount of background internet traffic for threat intelligence."

Some cybersecurity experts have speculated that the Pentagon may be using the newly advertised space to create "honeypots," machines set up with vulnerabilities to draw hackers. Or it could be looking to set up dedicated infrastructure — software and servers — to scour traffic for suspect activity.

"This greatly increases the space they could monitor," said Madory, who published a blog post on the matter Saturday.

What a Pentagon spokesman could not explain Saturday is why the Defense Department chose Global Resource Systems LLC, a company with no record of government contracts, to manage the address space.

"As to why the DoD would have done that I'm a little mystified, same as you," said Paul Vixie, an internet pioneer credited with designing its naming system and the CEO of Farsight Security.

The company did not return phone calls or emails from The Associated Press. It has no web presence, though it has the domain grscorp.

com. Its name doesn't appear on the directory of its Plantation, Florida, domicile, and a receptionist drew a blank when an AP reporter asked for a company representative at the office earlier this month. She found its name on a tenant list and suggested trying email. Records show the company has not obtained a business license in Plantation.

Incorporated in Delaware and registered by a Beverly Hills lawyer, Global Resource Systems LLC now manages more internet space than China Telecom, AT&T or Comcast.

The only name associated with it on the Florida business registry coincides with that of a man listed as recently as 2018 in Nevada corporate records as a managing member of a cybersecurity/internet surveillance equipment company called Packet Forensics. The company had nearly \$40 million in publicly disclosed federal contracts over the past decade, with the FBI and the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency among its customers.

That man, Raymond Saulino, is also listed as a principal in a company called Tidewater Laskin Associates, which was incorporated in 2018 and obtained an FCC license in April 2020. It shares the same Virginia

Beach, Virginia, address — a UPS store — in corporate records as Packet Forensics. The two have different mailbox numbers. Calls to the number listed on the Tidewater Laskin FCC filing are answered by an automated service that offers four different options but doesn't connect callers with a single one, recycling all calls to the initial voice recording.

Saulino did not return phone calls seeking comment, and a longtime colleague at Packet Forensics, Rodney Joffe, said he believed Saulino was retired. Joffe, a cybersecurity luminary, declined further comment. Joffe is chief technical officer at Neustar Inc., which provides internet intelligence and services for major industries, including telecommunications and defense.

In 2011, Packet Forensics and Saulino, its spokesman, were featured in a Wired story because the company was selling an appliance to government agencies and law enforcement that let them spy on people's web browsing using forged security certificates.

The company continues to sell "lawful intercept" equipment, according to its website. One of its current contracts with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency is for "harnessing autonomy for coun-

tering cyber-adversary systems." A contract description says it is investigating "technologies for conducting safe, nondisruptive, and effective active defense operations in cyberspace." Contract language from 2019 says the program would "investigate the feasibility of creating safe and reliable autonomous software agencies that can effectively counter malicious botnet implants and similar large-scale malware."

Deepening the mystery is Global Resource Systems' name. It is identical to that of a firm that independent internet fraud researcher Ron Guilmette says was sending out email spam using the very same internet routing identifier. It shut down more than a decade ago. All that differs is the type of company. This one's a limited liability corporation. The other was a corporation. Both used the same street address in Plantation, a suburb of Fort Lauderdale. "It's deeply suspicious," said Guilmette, who unsuccessfully sued the previous incarnation of Global Resource Systems in 2006 for unfair business practices. Guilmette considers such masquerading, known as slip-streaming, a ham-handed tactic in this situation. "If they wanted to be more serious about hiding this they could have not used Ray Saulino and this suspicious name."

Guilmette and Madory were alerted to the mystery when network operators began inquiring about it on an email list in mid-March. But almost everyone involved didn't want to talk about it. Mike Leber, who owns Hurricane Electric, the internet backbone company handling the address blocks' traffic, didn't return emails or phone messages. Despite an internet address crunch, the Pentagon — which created the internet — has shown no interest in selling any of its address space, and a Defense Department spokesman, Russell Goemaere, told the AP on Saturday that none of the newly announced space has been sold. □

# FDA to scrutinize unproven cancer drugs after 10-year gap

By Matthew Perrone AP  
Health Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Each year the U.S. approves dozens of new uses for cancer drugs based on early signs that they can shrink or slow the spread of tumors.

But how often do those initial results translate into longer, healthier lives for patients?

That seemingly simple question is one of the thorniest debates in medicine. It spills into public view Tuesday as the Food and Drug Administration convenes the first meeting in a decade to consider clawing back approvals from several cancer drugs that have failed to show they extend or improve life.

The agency says it has used innovative research shortcuts to speed up the availability of medicines for desperately ill patients. But many researchers say it has failed to crack down on medications that don't deliver on their early promise, leaving a glut of expensive, unproven cancer drugs on the market.

"Doctors are using these drugs and patients are receiving them with all their toxicities and without knowing whether they actually doing anything," said Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel, a cancer specialist and bioethicist at the University of Pennsylvania. "We should not be in a situation where we're endlessly uncertain."

The three-day meeting on drugs from Merck, Roche and Bristol-Myers Squibb is part of an industrywide review triggered by an "unprecedented level of drug



FILE - This Dec. 10, 2020 file photo shows Food and Drug Administration building in Silver Spring, Md. Each year the U.S. approves dozens of new uses for cancer drugs based on early signs that they can shrink or slow the spread of tumors. But how often do patients actually live longer, more active lives? That seemingly simple question is, in fact, one of the thorniest debates in medicine. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

development" in recent years, according to FDA officials. The agency has only held similar meetings three times in its history, the last one in 2011.

The U.S. spends more per person on prescription drugs than any other nation, and spending on cancer drugs has more than doubled since 2013 to over \$60 billion annually, according to the data firm IQVIA. New medications typically cost \$90,000 to \$300,000 a year. And those prices have risen much faster than patient survival. The FDA is prohibited from considering cost, but it is supposed to keep ineffective drugs off the market.

"This is finally a referendum, a small court, where we can ask whether we are we better off for spending all this money," said Dr. Vinay Prasad, a cancer specialist at University of California, San Francisco and longtime critic of FDA's approach. "And for many of these drugs, the answer looks like 'no.'"

The FDA will hear presentations from the drugmakers and seek advice from a panel of cancer experts. Agency leaders stated in a recent op-ed that the discussion is important because a failed study "does

not necessarily mean that the drug is ineffective." FDA makes the final decision on whether to pull approvals, but there are signs the agency may be ready for a tougher approach.

Since late last year, four drugmakers have "voluntarily" pulled approvals for several types of lung and bladder cancers after "consulting" with FDA. Each drug had failed to extend survival after initially winning FDA approval based on measures like tumor shrinkage.

The removal of four cancer approvals in quick succession is unprecedented. Several former FDA directors said at a recent conference that it showed the agency's so-called accelerated approval program is "healthy."

But the sheer rarity of such withdrawals undercuts that view. In 1992, Congress gave the FDA the ability to accelerate drug approvals based on preliminary study data, responding to protests from HIV patients and activists over the slow pace of drug development. The program was embraced by the industry for giving many drugs a faster, cheaper path to market.

As originally conceived, these quicker approvals

functioned like a contract: If the drugs weren't shown to help patients live longer or better lives in follow-up studies, the approvals would be revoked.

That's rarely happened. Of 155 expedited cancer approvals, 10 have been withdrawn, almost always voluntarily by the manufacturer. The FDA has used its authority to revoke an accelerated cancer approval only once. That long, ugly experience still looms large over the agency's oversight of cancer drugs.

It took the FDA more than a year to finally pull the breast cancer approval from Roche's blockbuster drug Avastin. The agency was besieged by calls from cancer patients and libertarian groups to keep the approval, despite clear evidence that it didn't extend life and caused dangerous side effects.

The drugs under review this week — Merck's Keytruda, Roche's Tecentriq and Bristol Myers Squibb's Opdivo — are part of a recent wave of "immunotherapies" that help the body's defense system recognize and attack cancer. The blockbuster drugs have shown life-extending gains against deadly forms of skin and lung cancer,

among other conditions. But they've also racked up several dozen approvals in other indications, including forms of bladder, throat and liver cancer that are the focus of the meeting. Studies by all three companies have shown negative or inconclusive results. Even if all six uses under review are withdrawn, the drugs will stay on the market because they are approved for so many other indications. And that may not change care much for patients. Dr. Shilpa Gupta of the Cleveland Clinic notes FDA approved five immunotherapy drugs for bladder cancer between 2016 and 2017 — including two under review.

"Did we really need all five of those drugs?" she asked. Accelerated approval is technically reserved for drugs that fill an "unmet need." But today roughly a third of all cancer drugs reach the market through the pathway, including many drugs approved for overlapping uses.

After years of studies criticizing the FDA's oversight of the program — including by government inspectors — agency scientists have begun pushing back. In a 2018 study, FDA staffers deemed the program a success, noting only 5% of accelerated cancer approvals had ever been withdrawn and 55% had been "verified" by follow-up studies.

But when Harvard researchers dug into that claim, they found that only about 20% of cancer drugs had actually been shown to extend lives. In most cases, the FDA had allowed drugmakers to confirm their drugs' worth by conducting a second study of a preliminary measure, such as tumor shrinkage or delayed tumor growth.

In some cancers, shrinking or slowing tumor growth is proven to benefit patients. But in many cases that link hasn't been established.

"Having a smaller cancer that kills you, rather than a bigger cancer, is no consolation because you're still dead," said Emanuel. □

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In this image made from NASA TV, the SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft is seen from the international space station, Saturday, April 24, 2021. The recycled SpaceX capsule carrying four astronauts has arrived at the International Space Station, a day after launching from Florida. (NASA via AP)

By Marcia Dunn AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) —

The International Space Station's population swelled to 11 on Saturday with the jubilant arrival of SpaceX's third crew capsule in less than a year.

It's the biggest crowd up there in more than a decade.

All of the astronauts — representing the U.S., Russia, Japan and France — managed to squeeze into camera view for a congratulatory call from the leaders of their space agencies.

"In this tough situation around the world, I believe you have brought courage and hope for all of us," Japanese Space Agency President Hiroshi Yamakawa said from his country's flight control center, referring to the global pandemic.

A recycled SpaceX capsule carrying four astronauts arrived at the space station a day after launching from NASA's Kennedy Space Center. The Dragon capsule docked autonomously with the orbiting outpost more than 260 miles (420 kilometers) above the Indian Ocean. The hatches swung open a couple hours later, uniting all 11 space travelers.

"Man, it is awesome to see the 11 of you on station," said NASA's acting administrator, Steve Jurczyk. He noted that this will be the norm, now that SpaceX is regularly flying crews.

The newcomers will spend six months at the space station. They'll replace four astronauts who will return to Earth in their own Dragon capsule Wednesday to end a half-year mission. NASA deliberately planned

for a brief overlap so the outgoing SpaceX crew could show the new arrivals around.

Although this was SpaceX's third crew flight for NASA, it was the first to use a vehicle that's flown before, an essential part of a plan

## BIGGEST SPACE STATION CROWD IN DECADE AFTER SPACEX ARRIVAL

by SpaceX founder and chief executive Elon Musk to push to the moon and Mars. The Dragon capsule was used for SpaceX's first crew launch last May, while the Falcon rocket soaring Friday hoisted crew two in November. It was the first time two SpaceX crew Dragons were parked there at the same time — practically side by side. NASA astronauts Shane Kimbrough and Megan McArthur — the commander and pilot of the returning Dragon — monitored their capsule's flat screen computers during the morning

rendezvous. □

### Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

6	3				4	1
5		6	3	4		8
	7			2		
4	2		9		5	
5					1	
7	4		6		8	
	8			1		
3		5	8	7		6
2	9				7	4

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## Review: An odd surrogate friendship in 'Together Together'

By LINDSEY BAHR

AP Film Writer

The new film "Together Together" has a great premise: A single, straight man wants to be a father and decides to hire a surrogate to help. It's fertile territory that has been fairly unexplored in popular art and brings with it a host of built-in dramatic and comedic opportunities, especially with someone like Ed Helms leading the cast.

Writer-director Nicole Beckwith ("Stockholm, Pennsylvania") instead chooses to focus on the relationship between Helms' character Matt and his surrogate, Anna (Patti Harrison) and it becomes just another semi-quirky, frustratingly surface exploration of two lonely headcases finding comfort in one another. In some ways, it's a quintessential Sundance film. The baby and the pregnancy become just a screenwriter's excuse to put these two together. It's too bad because Helms shows promise stretching in a more dramatic role and Harrison herself is a captivating presence.

Matt is a 40-something app developer living a comfortable life in San Francisco. Anna is in her mid-20s and working at a coffee shop. We're introduced to them



This image released by Bleecker Street shows Ed Helms, left, and Patti Harrison in a scene from "Together Together."

Associated Press

as Matt is interviewing potential surrogates and it's hardly an instant connection. In fact, it's a terribly stilted exchange that is made only somewhat funny by the excruciating awkwardness of it all. It's unclear if there were any other candidates to choose from but Matt for some reason chooses Anna as his gestational surrogate and soon they're having another stilted conversation at the doctor's office. She's pregnant.

It's not the first pregnancy for Anna. In the interview we find out that she had a baby that she gave up for

adoption as a teenager. The experience caused a rift with her family and she spent the next few years drifting and estranged. But she has a plan to get back on track and wants to use the money from the surrogacy to go to get a college degree in Vermont. From the start, Matt and Anna's relationship seems misguided and unhealthy. Matt starts showing up at her work and apartment bearing gifts like pregnancy tea and supportive clogs. They visit the doctor's together. They go out to dinner. They choose colors for the baby's nursery.

They even go to couple's therapy together and, separately, support groups for surrogates and expectant parents using surrogates. He monitors what she eats and how she's progressing and makes a big deal out of the fact that she's still dating in the first trimester. It all seems wildly inappropriate and overbearing, especially considering Anna doesn't even want to know the sex of the baby so she doesn't get attached. And although she talks about boundaries, soon she's staying at his house on the regular and binging "Friends" with him.

This might all be fine or understandable if Matt and Anna had some sort of chemistry with one another. I'm not even suggesting anything romantic. They're just two strangers thrust together by this surrogacy agreement and spending time with them is not fun, engaging or enlightening enough to sustain a movie. A strong supporting cast including Nora Dunn, Fred Melamed, Rosalind Cho, Sufe Bradshaw and Tig Notaro can't even help all that much in their limited time on screen.

Beckwith's script does have a few moments of grace and humor. Helms gets a particularly beautiful monologue about why he wants a child. And there are wry observations too about how all parenting books for single dads are for widows and divorcees. But there are far more clichés, contrivances and threads left unnecessarily dangling. Recent films like the fertility drama "Private Life" and the adoption comedy "Instant Family" have successfully and entertainingly taken audiences on journeys through different facets of modern parenting. "Together Together" had a chance to do that for surrogacy and single fatherhood but comes up short. □

## Loved ones remember DMX at homegoing celebration



People gather for a "Celebration of Life Memorial" for rapper DMX at Barclays Center, Saturday, April 24, 2021, in the Brooklyn borough of New York. DMX, whose birth name is Earl Simmons, died April 9 after suffering a "catastrophic cardiac arrest." (AP Photo/Brittany Newman)

NEW YORK (AP) — Family members, friends and

clergy members dressed in white and red honored

the life and faith of hip-hop icon DMX at his homegoing celebration Sunday in New York. Religious leaders and musicians prayed, sang and delivered moving tributes as members of DMX's family sat in the first rows of the Christian Cultural Center in Brooklyn. The private funeral service began 2:30 p.m. EDT Sunday and was broadcast live on BET and the network's YouTube channel.

The 50-year-old Grammy-nominated rapper and actor grew up just north of New York City in Yonkers and delivered iconic hip-hop songs such as "Ruff Ryders' Anthem" and "Party Up (Up in Here)." His electrifying music focused on

themes of religion, violence and redemption, and inspired scores of fans and performers worldwide.

DMX arrived on the rap scene around the same time as Jay-Z, Ja Rule and others who dominated the charts and emerged as platinum-selling acts. DMX fronted the Ruff Ryders collective, which had success on the charts and on radio with its "Ryde or Die" compilation albums.

Crowds of close family and friends also attended a two-hour memorial ceremony Saturday at the Barclays Center in New York, which featured a moving tribute from DMX's 15 children.

Both ceremonies were

closed to the public and restricted to close friends and family because of the coronavirus pandemic.

DMX, whose birth name was Earl Simmons, died April 9 after suffering what officials called a catastrophic cardiac arrest. He spent several days on life support after being rushed to a New York hospital from his home April 2. □

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9	5	6	8	7	3	4	1	2
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7	6	8	9	4	2	1	3	5
3	1	4	5	8	7	9	2	6
2	9	5	3	6	1	8	7	4

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## Barty beats Sabalenka 3-6, 6-0, 6-3 in Stuttgart final

STUTTGART, Germany (AP)

— Top-ranked Ash Barty beat Aryna Sabalenka 3-6, 6-0, 6-3 on Sunday to win the Porsche Grand Prix, her first title on clay since the 2019 French Open.

The Australian player clicked into gear for the final's second set, which she won in just 20 minutes, with Sabalenka taking a medical timeout ahead of the third.

Sabalenka emerged with a bandage around her right thigh and couldn't prevent Barty from going on to claim her 11th career title. It was the third straight come-from-behind win for Barty, who celebrated her 25th birthday by playing



Burnley's Chris Wood, right, and Wolverhampton Wanderers' Willian Jose challenge for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Wolves and Burnley at the Molineux Stadium in Wolverhampton, England, Sunday, April 25, 2021. (Michael Regan/Pool via AP)

## Wood hat trick as Burnley routs Wolves 4-0 in Premier League

WOLVERHAMPTON, England (AP) — Chris Wood scored a first-half hat trick and set up the other goal for Burnley to rout Wolverhampton 4-0 in the Premier League on Sunday.

The New Zealand international opened the scoring at Molineux in the 15th minute with a low shot inside the far post from a difficult angle, six minutes before he made it 2-0 with a close-range finish. □

three sets against Elina Svitolina in Saturday's semifinals. Barty also won in three sets against Karolina Pliskova in the quarterfinals. Barty and Jennifer Brady faced Desirae Krawczyk and Bethanie Mattek-Sands in the doubles final later Sunday as Barty bids to become the first player to win both the singles and doubles at Stuttgart since

Lindsay Davenport 20 years ago.

Barty saved eight of the 10 break points she faced against Sabalenka, converting five of the 12 opportunities she created to win in 1 hour, 47 minutes. The 22-year-old Sabalenka, who defeated Simona Halep to reach the final, had been going for her first career title. □



Ashleigh Barty of Australia plays against Aryna Sabalenka of Belarusia during their WTA Tour Women Final match in Stuttgart, Germany, Sunday April 25, 2021. (Marijan Murat/Pool via AP)

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## Magic coach Steve Clifford tests positive, will miss games

By Tim Reynolds AP Basketball Writer

( AP ) - Orlando Magic coach Steve Clifford has tested positive for the coronavirus and will miss multiple games while going through the NBA's health and safety protocols.

Assistant coach Tyrone Corbin will coach in Clifford's absence, starting with Sunday's game against Indiana. Clifford already expected to miss Sunday because of two positive tests in a three-day span, and subsequent testing confirmed that he has the virus.

There is no timetable for his return. Typically, those in the league who have tested positive have missed at least 10 days before being cleared to resume work. That would mean Clifford could miss much of the remainder of the season.

Even if Clifford misses just a week, he would still be out for five games. The Magic host the Los Angeles Lakers on Monday, then are at Cleveland on Wednesday and Memphis on Friday before returning home to meet the Grizzlies again on Saturday.

"I'm in a place here where I'm healthy enough so hopefully I can help somewhat," Clifford said. "But also I'm fortunate — I have a veteran staff."

Other NBA coaches have missed some time this season for virus-related reasons. Toronto's Nick Nurse had to miss three games



Orlando Magic head coach Steve Clifford calls a play during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Toronto Raptors Friday, April 16, 2021, in Tampa, Fla. (AP Photo/Chris O'Meara)

because he and several of his assistant coaches were dealing with the protocols, and Dallas' Rick Carlisle missed one game earlier this month following a false positive test.

Clifford originally tested positive Thursday night. He returned two negative tests Friday, giving hope that the first positive was a false result, then learned Saturday

afternoon that a test he took that morning came back positive. He was tested again after that positive, and the decision was revealed Sunday that he must enter the protocols.

Clifford has received both doses of the Moderna vaccine, getting the second one on Thursday. He is not yet considered "fully vaccinated" by Centers for Dis-

ease Control and Prevention protocols, since two weeks have not passed since his final dose. He said he has experienced no side effects from the vaccine.

"I feel fine," Clifford said. "I have no temperature. I feel 100%."

He has dealt with some health issues in the past, including missing 21 games during the 2017-18 season when he coached in Charlotte after problems caused by sleep deprivation presented themselves, and he left a game at Minnesota in March 2020 after experiencing dizziness caused by dehydration.

Corbin filled in for Clifford in that game against the Timberwolves.

Corbin also spent parts of four seasons coaching Utah and part of the 2014-15 season coaching Sacramento.

"I feel comfortable that I'm not really in danger," Clifford said. "That with the fact that my temperature, my oxidation numbers, how I feel, I have no side effects right now, I'm very comfortable with that."

Clifford's situation is just the latest in a series of challenges for the Magic this season, following a trade-deadline franchise restart with the trades of Nikola Vucevic, Aaron Gordon and Evan Fournier, along with Markelle Fultz being lost early in the season to a knee injury and Jonathan Isaac missing the entire year with a knee injury he suffered in the NBA's restart bubble last August.

Orlando was the NBA's last team to remain unbeaten at the beginning of the season, getting off to a 4-0 start. The Magic were 6-2 after an early January sweep of a two-game set against Cleveland — then lost 15 of their next 18 games, and it's only gotten worse from there.

Their longest winning streak in the last two months has been two games. They've lost 10 of their last 11 and entered Sunday with the fourth-worst record in the NBA at 18-41, just a game ahead of Detroit for the worst mark in the Eastern Conference.

"It's been a tough year," Clifford said. "But you have to evaluate things, you have to self-reflect, and this is not easy for guys either. The easy thing to do for me as a head coach is say, 'Oh, woe is me.' But our guys are trying hard.... I want them to get the most out of this last 13 games as they can." □



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